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AUTHOR Pennington, Martha C.
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ABSTRACT

Robert Katz's model of the effective administrator, based on essential technical, human, and conceptual skills, offers a useful framework for the administrator of a program in English as a second language (ESL). The technical, human, and conceptual skills specific to the ESL program environment are outlined and illustrated, and Katz's estimation of the relative importance of the several skill areas at different levels of administration and his technique of creating administrative teams are applied to the ESL program. Limitations on the development or enhancement of the skills in particular individuals in the ESL program context are examined, and it is suggested that Katz's model points to a need for greater emphasis on practical experience and training for administrative positions in this field. (MSE)

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EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATION OF AN ESL PROGRAM

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Martha C. Pennington
University of California, Santa Barbara

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Introduction

In a classic article, Skills of an Effective Administrator, Robert L. Katz defines an administrator as "one who (a) directs the activities of other persons and (b) undertakes the responsibility for achieving certain objectives through these efforts" (1983:24). According to Katz, the effective direction of others and accomplishment of objectives which characterize successful administration "rest on three basic skills, which we will call *technical, human and conceptual*" (1983:24). Katz's approach to administration has much to offer in the way of insight and practical guidance for all types of administrative or management contexts. In Katz's words:

> This approach is based not on what good [administrators] *are* (their traits and characteristics) but rather on what they *do* (the kinds of skills which they exhibit in carrying out their jobs effectively). As used here, a *skill* implies an ability which can be developed, not necessarily inborn, and which is manifested in performance, not merely in potential (1983: 24).

With some interpretation and with the inclusion of relevant examples, Katz's model becomes a description of a particular administrative environment. Below, I offer an interpretation of Katz's model as applied to the particular environment of ESL administration.[1]

Martha C. Pennington is a linguist and the academic coordinator of the English Language Program, University of California, Santa Barbara.

[1]The administration of an ESL program or department, as here conceived, includes all of those individuals employed in the ESL program or department who are performing functions other than teaching ESL students. In any given case, the administration might therefore include job titles such as Program or Departmental Director/Coordinator, Academic or Curriculum Director/Coordinator, Teacher Supervisor, Student Services Coordinator or International Student Advisor, Administrative Assistant, Clerk/Typist, Work-Study Student and possibly others.

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Technical Skill

Technical skill is the result of training and experience in a particular field. In Katz's characterization:

> technical skill implies an understanding of, and proficiency in, a specific kind of activity, particularly one involving methods, processes, procedures, or techniques.... Technical skill involves specialized knowledge, analytical ability within that specialty, and facility in the use of the tools and techniques of the specific discipline (1983:24).

Under Katz's conception of technical skill, administration of an ESL program might require the following sorts of specialized knowledge and abilities:

- English language (phonetics, grammar, morphology)
- Teaching (methods, techniques)
- Educational materials (evaluation, adaptation, development)
- Audiovisual equipment (operation, uses)
- Curriculum design
- Testing and placement
- Immigration matters
- Personnel (hiring, training, evaluation of faculty and office staff)
- Finances (budgeting, accounting)
- Administrative supplies and equipment (operation, uses, inventory management)
- Development (grants proposals, program promotion, student recruitment)
- Administrative writing (memos, reports, contracts, promotional literature)
- Record-keeping systems
- Computer skills[3]

Besides making it possible for an administrator to directly accomplish a job when the need arises, technical skill in a particular field makes it easier for an administrator to realistically perceive and assess the technical work of others in the same organization or field. In addition, having strong technical skills in the field in which one is an administrator (for example, having a strong command of ESL methods and materials) is one way of gaining respect from employees (in this case, instructors) and thus gaining their confidence and cooperation. In contrast, ESL administrators who do not have strong classroom skills will probably be viewed by faculty members as having one strike against them, and hence will have to rely on other ways of gaining instructors' respect, confidence and cooperation.

[3]Obviously, many of the areas of technical skill (as well as human and conceptual skill, as will be seen below) which are relevant for ESL administration are relevant for any type of administration.

Human Skill

Katz defines human skill as the administrator's

> ability to work effectively as a group member and to build cooperative effort within the team he [or she] leads. As *technical skill* is primarily concerned with working with "things" (processes or physical objects), so *human skill* is demonstrated in the way the individual perceives (and recognizes the perceptions of) his [or her] superiors, equals, and subordinates, and in the way he [or she] behaves subsequently (1983:24).[3]

The administrator with strong human skills is not only aware of and sensitive to the needs and motivations of others, but also "is able and willing to *act* in a way which takes these perceptions by others into account" (Katz 1983:24-25). This type of administrator wants to know about employees' concerns, needs and opinions regarding the organization and the part that they play within it. The administrator has the wisdom and the self-control to suppress the desire to dominate in conversations and instead concentrates on listening to what other members of the organization have to say. The administrator who has highly developed human skills understands the constraints and restraints operating upon employees which may make them reluctant to express their ideas, suggestions, complaints and criticisms openly and with candor (see Roy 1965: 164-172). In Katz's words:

> Such a person works to create an atmosphere of approval and security in which [employees] feel free to express themselves without fear of censure or ridicule, by encouraging them to participate in the planning and carrying out of those things which directly affect them (1983:24).

Some of the areas in ESL administration where human skill comes into play are the following:

- Presentations
- Training sessions
- Meetings
- Giving individual counsel and feedback
- Curriculum development and implementation
- Handling complaints and criticisms
- Making changes
- Keeping morale high

In a presentation, the speaker must have the communicative skill to arouse, as well as to sustain, attention and interest in the audience. In addition, presen-

[3]Katz and the other authors cited in works published before the present decade used the masculine pronoun exclusively. I have corrected for this bias through non-significant changes or additions, using standard bracketting conventions. These conventions have also been used to substitute words such as "employee" for "subordinate," "employer" for "superior," or "administrator" for "executive," to give the cited passages a more neutral or wider reference.

tations often are intended to convince the audience of the correctness or viability of some point of view or course of action and so presuppose the ability to persuade. For ESL, under the category of Presentations are included not only presentations at conferences, but also prepared or "off-the-cuff" remarks at welcoming or orientation sessions for students, presentation of new ideas for discussion at faculty meetings, and proposals made to the institutional director (e.g., the dean or principal). In training sessions for faculty or staff – e.g., in how to work with certain materials or how to operate a certain piece of equipment (overhead projector, computer) – the facilitator has to not only arouse and sustain the attention and interest of the participants, but also to motivate them to involve themselves in active, "hands-on" experience during and after the session, through which they will acquire new skills.

The administration of an ESL program involves many different types of meetings – with students, student sponsors, faculty, office staff, and administrators from other departments or institutions. To be a successful participant in a meeting, the administrator must possess the interactional skills to express ideas clearly, attractively and succinctly; to listen carefully to other participants and to comprehend the full import of their statements; and to show an attitude of tolerance for and interest in others' ideas. Such interactional skills become even more important when the administrator is leading the meeting.

Conducting successful meetings, whether they be informal discussion sessions or structured group sessions with prepared agenda and goals, requires a high degree of human skill. Group leaders must be able not only to interact effectively as group members themselves, but also to guide the other members of the group to successful interaction. This means, for example, maintaining the delicate balance between ensuring that everyone has ample time to express opinions while not allowing individuals to speak at such length that the other group members feel that their time is being wasted. The effective group leader has skill in several other aspects of group process as well: in drawing out every member of the group to participate fully, in paraphrasing or explaining statements to clarify meaning, in helping the group to see the implications of any position or course of action, and in guiding them to reach consensus or compromise when a decision needs to be made. The administrator will need cross-cultural skills in meetings with ESL students.

Individual counseling and feedback by the ESL administrator occurs in a variety of situations: evaluations of staff and faculty performance (in evaluations of specific projects as well as in general – performance reviews), discussions about an individual's present and future role in the organization, sessions where personal concerns of faculty or staff members relevant to the work environment are discussed and student disciplinary cases and in the variety of other cases in which an international student may need counseling of some kind. Giving counsel and feedback of different types – both positive and negative – to faculty members, staff members, and students demands the use of many kinds of interactional skills. In a counseling or feedback session, the administrator needs to draw out the other party, e.g., by showing concern and asking open-ended questions; to listen actively and ensure mutual understanding, e.g., by paraphrasing, explaining and illustrating points; to be clear and specific about performance, behavior or incidents relating to the session; and to give advice which will prove meaningful and

useful for the person being counseled and which can help to produce desirable or necessary changes in behavior.

Curriculum development is in large measure a group process which involves faculty members and an administrator who may be designated curriculum coordinator. Curriculum development therefore requires a facilitator skilled in conducting meetings and in leading a group to reach consensus or compromise. Human skill comes into play in many aspects of curriculum implementation, which ordinarily involves periodic meetings, as well as presentations, training sessions, observation, and feedback and counseling sessions.

The ESL administrator needs human skill to deal with situations of disequilibrium in the organization, as when problems arise or when students, faculty or office staff members register complaints or criticisms. The skilled administrator will be able to handle problems, complaints and criticisms quickly and locally before they can cause any major disruption in the organization. Disequilibrium is also created when the administration seeks to make major changes in the organization. The successful implementation of an organizational change requires a great deal of human skill. First of all, the administrator needs to prepare employees for the change by careful communications which set up conditions for the change to occur. Second, the administrator will have to practice persuasion, negotiation and compromise since any major change – e.g., in staffing or course structure – may cause conflicts and contrasting priorities to develop. The human skill of the administrator will in large measure determine the severity of the effects of the change as well as the speed with which structure, confidence and security – i.e., equilibrium – return to the organization.

In order to raise morale and maintain morale, the administrator must exercise a high degree of human skill. The administrator contributes to good morale in communicating to employees that they are full participating members of the organization and in instilling in them a sense of superiority about the organization of which they are members (see Roy 1965:126-157). In addition, the administrator must communicate to employees vision for the future. In the words of Roy:

> Where organization morale is low, hope and anticipation of the future are likely to be dim. One requirement for raising morale is, somehow, the imparting of hope to the individuals who comprise the organization, to give them the uplifting idea that now, at last, the the organization is "going somewhere" (1965:146-147).

As an instance from ESL, we can think of the current situation of low enrollments in many university-level ESL programs. To keep morale up in a time of low enrollments, the program administrator needs the full participation and cooperation of the faculty and office staff in maintaining or producing high academic standards and in working toward future enrollments.

In Katz's view:

> Real skill in working with others must become a natural, continuous activity since it involves sensitivity not only at times of decision making but also in the day-to-day behavior of the individual. Human skill cannot be a "some time thing"... Because everything which an [administrator] says and does (or leaves unsaid or undone) has an effect on his

> [or her] associates, [the] true self will, in time, show through. Thus, to be effective, this skill must be naturally developed and unconsciously, as well as consistently, demonstrated in the individual's every action. It must become an integral part of [the person's] whole being (1983:25).

It is essential that a person's administrative style, or what might be called the administrative personality, be based on and consistent with the type of style and personality which the person exhibits outside the administrative context. Adopting a calculated, perhaps stereotypical, administrative style, that is, taking a posture which is felt to be appropriate for an administrator but which must be self-consciously maintained in every situation, will not result in success as an administrator because a "lack of sincerity will be perceived and suspected..." (Roy 1965:22).

According to Katz, "[b]ecause human skill is so vital a part of everything the administrator does, examples of inadequate human skill are easier to describe than are highly skillful performances" (1983:25). For ESL, we might cite cases such as an in-service workshop being given by a curriculum coordinator who cannot communicate knowledge well. As a result of the administrator's poor performance, the faculty becomes dissillusioned with the idea of in-service workshops and loses respect for the coordinator. In the worst case, this disillusionment and loss of respect can result in hostility by faculty members towards the coordinator and towards any proposals or attempts which the coordinator makes to improve teaching performance. Another failure in human skill might be an administrator's inability to muster enthusiasm and support for a new curriculum proposal, or gain acceptance for a sound idea because of a poor presentation.

If the curriculum coordinator does not relate well to the faculty members in a particular program, they will not communicate readily to the coordinator important information or feelings. In such a situation, the transfer of distorted information is likely to take the place of open communications channels, and feelings will probably surface at some point in unexpected and non-constructive ways. At the very least, morale will suffer, and in the worst case, the situation can become explosive.

In this day and age, human skill is of particular importance, as stressed by Tannenbaum and Schmidt:

> Today's [administrator] is more likely to deal with employees who resent being treated as subordinates, who may be highly critical of any organizational system, who expect to be consulted and to exert influence, and who often stand on the edge of alienation from the institution that needs their loyalty and commitment (1983:11).

In educational administration, perhaps more than in any other type of administration, human skill is essential. Roy puts it this way:

> A military commander at any rank *must* give orders; to do otherwise would be to appear a misfit. At the opposite extreme, in academic organizations, those in administrative positions *cannot* give orders.

> Behind this lies a long tradition of academic freedom, job tenure, diversification of scholarship and technical knowledge (1965:38).

An effective educational administrator must *sell* rather than *tell*, persuade rather than dictate. Thus, the stereotypical administrator does not belong in educational administration:

> There is a widespread and erroneous belief that to be an administrator one must fill the image of the legendary "captain of industry," impressive and aggressive, decisive and peremptory. This is true only when to be impressive and aggressive, decisive and peremptory is appropriate to the organization to which the "captain" is attached. When this is not so, the result of such an attachment and such behavior is destructive either of the organization or of the [administrator] (Roy 1965:39).

Conceptual Skill

The third area of administrative skill which Katz defines, conceptual skill:

> involves the ability to see the enterprise as a whole; it includes recognizing how the various functions of the organization depend on one another, and how changes in any one part affect all the others; and it extends to visualizing the relationship of the individual [organization] to the entire field, the community, and to political, social and economic forces. Recognizing these relationships and perceiving the significant elements in any situation, the administrator should then be able to act in a way which advances the overall welfare of the total organization (1983:26).

Conceptual skill is the basis for all planning and decision-making, which are at the heart of the administrative function. For the development and implementation of effective plans and decisions rests on the ability to recognize the full implications of any course of action or change.

According to Katz:

> Not only does the effective coordination of the various parts of [an organization] depend on the conceptual skill of the administrators involved, but so also does the whole future direction and tone of the organization (1983:26).

A further respect in which administrative decision-making and action are oriented towards the future is observed Roy: "In a very large number of decisions, the alternative choices lie between incurring costs or risks now as against the possibility of larger aggregate gains in the future" (1965:216). In planning for the future of an organization, an administrator sets goals and priorities for the organization as a whole and for the individual jobs within it. These goals and priorities involve not only the organization's use of (present and future) financial resources, but also its use of (present and future) human resources. Thus, part of the con-

ceptual skill needed to run a successful organization is being able to determine the best use of people's time, the administrator's and everyone else's in the organization.

To give a more concrete picture of the ways in which conceptual skill is needed in ESL administration, two typical examples are offered below of cases in which the administrator is faced with difficult or complex situations whose resolution will require a high degree of conceptual skill.

EXAMPLE 1

The director of an ESL program does not feel that the program can afford the full expense of an academic coordinator. Yet the administrator feels that the faculty needs closer coordination. Some possible alternatives are:

(a) The director provides closer coordination of the faculty.

(b) The director selects experienced instructors to serve as skill area coordinators – one for Reading and Writing and one for Speaking and Listening – reducing their teaching load to three-quarter time, with no change in salary.

(c) The director promotes an experienced instructor to become a half-time academic coordinator and half-time instructor, at the same salary.

Alternative (a) is desirable in that it requires no additional expenditure of money and will put the director in closer contact with the faculty, the students and the day-to-day operation of the program. It has the potential drawbacks of requiring the administrator to increase time on-site and in individual conferences and meetings, particularly with instructors, and of taking time away from the administrator for planning and a host of non-academic administrative functions. Hence, this alternative would probably not be possible in a period of major change and planning for the future, where the director's input is crucial, and it is probably only a short-term solution to the problem of faculty coordination.

Alternatives (b) and (c) would require either an increase in class size or the addition of one or more part-time instructors at an additional expense. On the positive side, these alternatives would allow the director to focus on planning and other non-academic administrative functions and so make it possible to develop and implement changes and new directions for the program. In addition, these alternatives offer chances for growth and development of faculty members in coordinator positions. On the negative side, the promotion of one or more instructors to positions of some authority increases the hierarchical structure of the organization and may create rivalries and friction within the faculty. From this perpective, alternative (c) would seem to be less desirable than alternative (b), in which two faculty members have the opportunity to share in coordination of the academic program. However, alternative

(c) would probably provide the maximum degree of coordination of the academic program with the least input from the director.

EXAMPLE 2

Considering the political, social and economic situation of the world today, the administrator of an ESL program (which may or may not be completely self-supporting) has to plan how to continue enrollment growth and on which countries to target recruitment. In making decisions about student recruitment (and promotion), the administrator will need to conceptualize the political, social and economic situation in each part of the world and consider the implications of various alternative courses of action. Only by comparing the potential benefits and drawbacks of each course of action in each geographical area will the administrator be able to set priorities which will be in the best interests of the long-term growth or stability of the program.

An administrator who lacks conceptual skill will have difficulty making sound decisions and may be likely either to avoid making decisions or changes, thus risking the organization will stagnate and lose its competitive or qualitative edge, or else to make rash judgments and later be constantly changing course to correct the errors in judgment. Administrators with some degree of conceptual skill may be able to generate a number of possible courses of action to build up an organization, but lack the high degree of conceptual skill needed to select alternatives and to prioritize the use of the organization's time. These administrators are likely to exhaust themselves and their employees pursuing false leads and impractical schemes, though some of the directions—by the sheer number of them—will probably prove to be productive. Moreover, employee morale and productivity can remain high in such cases until burnout occurs or "the uplifting idea that now, at last, the organization is 'going somewhere'" (Roy 1965:147) can no longer be sustained. This case is but one illustration of the fact that even an organization which appears to be poorly managed may be successful, e.g., if the service or product which it provides is in high demand[4] or if the employees are hard-working and of high quality. In Roy's words:

> there are no absolute criteria for organization success; each is weighed against others equally susceptible to error. As one very perceptive student remarked, organizations, in a certain sense, do not succeed by being better than their rivals but only by being "less worse" (1965:41).

Relative Importance of the Skills at Different Levels of Administration

As Katz reminds us:

[4]As was the case only a few years ago, when we experienced a seller's market for ESL instruction in which many programs of questionable quality emerged and even flourished for a time.

> This separation of effective administration into three basic skills is useful primarily for purposes of analysis. In practice, these skills are so closely interrelated that it is difficult to determine where one ends and another begins. However, just because the skills are interrelated does not imply that we cannot get some value from looking at them separately, or by varying their emphasis (1983:27).

To make an analogy, the game of tennis requires many kinds of interrelated actions. Yet in trying to improve my game, I am able to work on one shot or one skill—or even one component of a shot (for instance, the toss of the serve)—separately. Also, different tennis shots or skills have variable importance, depending on the type of game (e.g., singles or doubles), the strategy of the opponent, and the values of a variety of situational variables.

Similarly, although all three administrative skills are of importance at every level of administration, the technical, human and conceptual skills of the administrator vary in relative importance at different levels of responsibility (Katz 1983:27).

According to Katz (1983:27), technical skill is most important at lower levels of administration. In ESL, the more distant an administrator is from the day-to-day operation of the program or department, i.e., from the classroom and from routine paperwork and other daily tasks, the less important it will be for that administrator to be technically skilled, provided that the administrator has skilled instructors and administrative assistants. However, technical skill is not entirely unimportant at the top level of administration. This is especially true in smaller enterprises, where the administrator is likely not to have assistants who can oversee technical functions.

In contrast to technical skill, human skill, in Katz's view, "is essential to effective administration at every level" (1983:28). In educational administration, outstanding human skill can make up substantially for what an individual lacks in technical or conceptual skill and go a very long way towards ensuring the success, if not in fact then at least in appearance,[3] of the administrative enterprise. Whether or not human skill is the most significant predictor of actual organizational success, it does appear to be valued more highly than technical and conceptual skill as an indication of management capability. It is, therefore, a good predictor of the degree and speed that an individual will be advanced in the management hierarchy.

[3] In enterprises which are not motivated by a need to make a profit or to have an internally balanced budget e.g., in educational units wholly or partially supported by tax revenues or by other resources outside the purview of the administrator of that unit, there may be little difference between appearing to be well-run and actually being well-run. In organizations which must make a profit or at least break even to continue to exist, an organization which appears to be smoothly functioning may in fact be operating at a deficit and not be successful in terms of its profit-oriented objectives.

On the other hand, there are plenty of cases in which an individual, though lacking human skill in Katz's (1983) sense, is arguably effective as an administrator.[6] Katz cites cases – and we could add our own for ESL – in which an inconsistent and unpredictable administrator, through the effects of a strong personality and some degree of intimidation, is able to obtain very high performance from all employees, though they are constantly complaining and chronically insecure. Of course, it makes a difference what the criteria for evaluation are and who is evaluating such an individual's performance whether the person will be evaluated positively or negatively. Evaluation of administrative performance is a complicated and often subjective matter which cannot be defined by the criterion of popularity or morale, nor by any single criterion. As stressed in the introduction to Katz's article, administrative skillfulness is to be judged in terms of "effective action under varying conditions" (1983:24). An effective administrator is flexible and is able to "strike different balances among [the] personal skills as conditions chance or as [the] organization grows in size and complexity" (Katz 1983:35).

Creating Administrative Teams

In Katz's view, "it is impossible for anyone to perform well in these continually changing roles without help" (1983:35). Fortunately, "[the] three-skill concept suggests immediate possibilities for the creating of [administrative] teams of individuals with complementary skills" (Katz 1983:30). As an example, a possible structure for a relatively large ESL program might be as shown in Figure 1. In Figure 1, the unit director or principal is outside the ESL department proper. This person is the immediate supervisor of the ESL program director, whose position is supervisory to all other positions in the hierarchy shown.

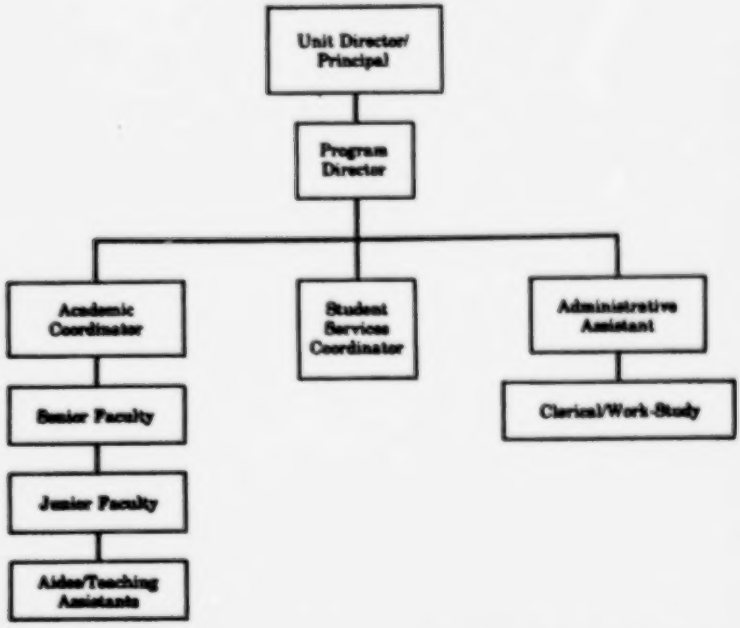
Directly below the program director are three positions, those of academic coordinator, student services coordinator and administrative assistant. These three people provide technical assistance to the director respectively in the academic area (e.g., curriculum, methods and materials), the student services area (e.g., student counseling, immigration, housing), and in the clerical area (e.g., typing, filing, mailing). They also provide technical assistance and leadership to those whom they coordinate. In the case of the academic coordinator, this means the faculty; in the case of the student services coordinator, this means the students; and in the case of the administrative assistant, this means the clerical/work-study team. Since they are in constant contact with those whom they supervise, all three of these individuals need to have excellent human skills.

While the three administrators under the program director need some level of conceptual skill to advise the director and to keep their parts of the operation running smoothly, the primary planner in the organization pictured in Figure 1 is the program director. If the organizational structure is *in practice* what it is according to the figure,[7] then the program director should be relatively removed from

[6]One might claim that an administrator who achieves high performance from all employees is by definition one with human skill, but I do not think that this is what Katz intends.

[7]As Roy points out, "tables of organization are seldom quite what they seem to be, and they do not often mean the same thing to the administrator that they do to the [employees]" (1965:10).

FIGURE 1
A Possible Structure for
a Large Language Program

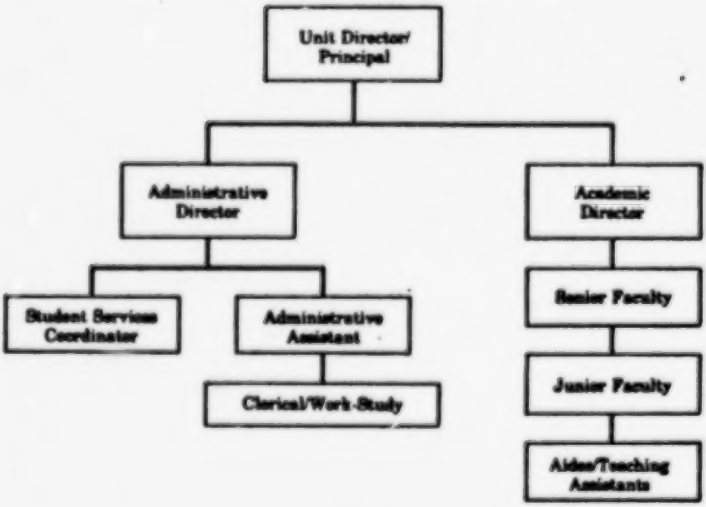


day-to-day operation of the program and so have the time and the flexibility needed for planning for the future of the organization. In this organizational structure, then, it would be expected that the program director has highly developed conceptual skill. Human skill would also be expected, for inspiring and coordinating the three individuals immediately under the director position and to represent the interests of the ESL department to the unit director or principal.

Notice that neither the program director nor the unit director, as shown in Figure 1, needs to know much about the technical side of ESL in a large program like the one represented in the figure, which has several specialized administrative positions. The person could in fact be a professional administrator who has come to ESL from some other administrative area.

A similar but somewhat different organization is shown in Figure 2. The main difference between Figure 1 and Figure 2 is in the relative level of the supervisor of the academic program. In Figure 2 the academic manager is a director, and the academic program functions autonomously of the administrative director (program director of Figure 1). This organizational structure, with the person managing the academic program in a high level position, is not inappropriate for an educational enterprise. However, I suspect that in practice the two directors would not remain equivalent, one or the other would emerge as a leader within the entire program, or that the two parts of the organization would not be well-integrated. From a practical point of view, it is not feasible for the plan-

FIGURE 2
A Second Possible Structure for
a Large Language Program



ning and the control of a department to be equally shared by two individuals; someone must take responsibility for making final decisions. It is probably not a good idea either for conceptual direction and overall control of a department to rest entirely outside the department, as might happen in the organizational structure shown in Figure 2. The unit director/principal might be responsible for mediating between the two directors and for making all high-level decisions.

Development of the Three Skills

There are some limitations on the possibility of developing or enhancing the skills for particular individuals. For one thing, the skills may be incompatible to some extent. It seems to me that the kind of person who is likely to be highly skilled on a technical level may not have an aptitude for or an interest in the kind of politics which are often required in the human skill area. Also, as Katz (1983:34) points out, conceptual skill may be something which is developed or not developed early in life and which can be enhanced in adulthood, but probably not developed from scratch in adulthood. Thus, you may have to choose between an academic coordinator with great expertise in ESL or one who will exhibit great human skill in all situations. This adds support to the idea of complementary jobs requiring different proportions and combinations of skills in an ESL program.

What training there is in ESL administration concentrates primarily on the imparting of information rather than on the enhancement of skills. Sadly, most TESL classes—in fact, most education classes—are predominantly of the informative type. Yet the "skill conception implies *learning by doing* . . . . [S]kills are

developed through practice and through relating learning to one's own personal experience and background" (Katz 1983:31).

In Katz's view, technical skill is best developed through:

> [s]ound grounding in the principles, structures, and processes of the individual specialty, coupled with actual practice and experience during which the individual is watched and helped by a [supervisor]...(1983:31).

Technical skill training in ESL is readily available though this is provided more through teaching practica than it is through course work, which tends to involve more telling by the instructor than doing by the students. Other technical aspects of administrative work in ESL—involving, for example, immigration matters, budgeting, promotion, or the more mundane but equally important office skills of filing and recordkeeping—are not provided at all in ESL training programs.

Information is readily available on how to improve human skill, though "[a]s a practical matter..., the [administrator] must develop his [or her] own human skill, rather than lean on the advice of others" (Katz (1983:31). In a group of trainees:

> the use of case problems coupled with impromptu role playing can be very effective. This training...requires a skilled instructor and an organized sequence of activities.... An important part of the procedure is the self-examination of the trainee's own concepts and values, which may enable [the trainee] to develop more useful attitudes about himself [or herself] and about others. With the change in attitude, hopefully, there may also come some active skill in dealing with human problems (Katz 1983:32).

Supervisory or management courses which offer analysis and case-study could be beneficial in developing conceptual skills of value for one going into ESL administfation. I believe that it is well worth the investment for a program to pay for such course work. Perhaps course work in *thinking skills* such as that offered by the Edward De Bono School of Thinking would be of value in developing conceptual skill. I suspect that course work in a variety of areas, or a liberal arts background might be equally valuable for the development of conceptual skill.

Taking my cue from enterprises outside of education, I want to propose the idea of an ESL administrative traineeship. In my opinion, the best way for someone to develop skills which will be useful in ESL administration is to work for some time—six months to a year as an administrative trainee or apprentice. I am proposing an administrative practicum. No one would disagree that a practicum is absolutely essential for a prospective teacher, and I see no reason that the situation should be any different in the case of a prospective administrator. As far as I know, however, there is no such position in the field of ESL. As a consequence, a very large number of ESL administrators have taken on their highly responsible positions with little or no background beyond teaching and curriculum development, and have been held responsible for some rather serious administrative errors.

The situation would no doubt have been different if it had been possible for those individuals to work in the status of trainees for a year under the direct su-

pervision of a trained professional who might be the dean, the program director, or a similar administrator at another school. People would expect a trainee to make mistakes and would be more tolerant when the person did, in fact, commit errors. Moreover, the trainee, rather than becoming defensive about errors, would be in a position to gracefully accept advice. Prentice makes the important observation that "[n]o genuine growth of an employee will occur without some teaching" (1983:5). As Roy points out, in a situation such as the administrative apprenticeship which I am proposing, "[when supervision is relatively close..., action can be continuous, independent of crisis, and corrective rather than punitive" (1965:45).

"It should be [the supervisor's] concern to watch the long-term growth of [the trainee] to see that, as [the person] learn[s], ...successes increasingly outweigh...failures" (Prentice 1983:5). The supervisor cannot only provide coaching and encouragement, but also serve as a role model for the trainee, in both the human skill and conceptual skill areas. There should be frequent observation of the trainee's ability to work with others, followed by sessions in which the supervisor gives specific feedback and suggestions for improvement. In addition, the trainee should have frequent opportunities to observe the supervisor in action and to ask questions about what is observed.

The supervisor can have an open-door policy during the training period, and the trainee can be made to feel that questions and requests for aid are part of the training. A supervisor can help the trainee develop conceptual skill "by assigning a particular responsibility, and then responding with searching questions or opinions, rather than giving answers whenever the [trainee] seeks help" (Katz 1983:32). Another excellent way to develop conceptual skill is through observing (and possibly participating in) other jobs in the organization. Such experience will help the trainee to develop a sense of the organization as a whole. In fact, I think it would be worthwhile to require all new employees, including instructors, to spend some hours during their first few months of employment in each of the administrative offices of a program. Allowing a trainee to visit other programs to observe their administrative function is another experience which will add to the trainee's ability to conceptualize the workings of the home organization and the place it occupies vis-a-vis the field as a whole.

Conclusion

Both Prentice (1983) and Roy (1965) see the effective administrator as a kind of artist. Prentice puts it this way: "[A]n administrator must use his [or her] skills and...human insight as does an orchestra leader – to capture individual satisfactions in the common enterprise..."(1983:7). In the words of Roy, " [a]dministration is as yet an art, refined in the clinic of experience..." (1965:26). Administration is not a science; situations are unpredictable and problems do not have correct solutions. As a result, "[w]e cannot measure administrative results other than relatively..." (Roy 1965:19).

The administrative model developed by Robert L. Katz and interpreted in this article captures the chameleon-like nature of administrative "artists," stressing the need for an array of skills which allow them to adjust to the variety of contexts in which they find themselves. This three-skill model offers a useful framework

for describing ESL administration and points the way towards a greater emphasis on practical experience and training for administrative positions in the field.

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